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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/666,004	09/17/2003	Juei-Mei Wang		6608

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EXAMINER	
ALPERT, JAMES M	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3624	

DATE MAILED: 01/12/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/666,004	WANG, JUEI-MEI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	James Alpert	3624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *17 September 2003*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-11* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-11* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *9/17/2003*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

The application has been examined, and Claims 1-11 are pending. The objections and rejections are as stated below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Land et al., U.S. Patent #6807533, in view of Wong, U.S. Patent #6115690, in further view of Lee et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication #20030074289. Claims 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wong, U.S. Patent #6115690, in view of Lee et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication #20030074289.

With regard to Claim 1, Land teaches a system comprising:

a database server for storing accounts receivable data;
(Figure 2, item 36)

an application server that is electrically connected with the database server for accessing and processing data stored in the database server, the application server comprising: (Figure 2, item 40)

a data obtaining module for obtaining data from external systems,
(Figure 1, items 12 and 20, showing the server connected with an sales and inventory system)

an accounts receivable managing module for managing and updating the accounts receivable data stored in the database server, and
(Figure 6 and Col. 6 lines 6-20)

an account booking module for automatically generating accounting entries; and (Figure 7 and Col. 6 lines 26-40)

a plurality of client computers electrically connected to the application server for downloading data from and uploading data to the database server. (Figure 2, items 64-72)

Land suggests that his web based accounts receivable system accommodates discounts and sales returns at (Col. 10 lines 32-39). However, Land does not explicitly disclose the following limitations:

1) a sales return managing module for managing accounting operations related to sales returns, or

2) a sales discount managing module for managing accounting operations related to sales discounts.

In an analogous comprehensive web commerce system, Wong teaches limitation 1 at (Col. 20, lines 34-48), describing how sales returns can be automated with various other modules. The sales returns module is described thoroughly at Col. 29 line 23 and continuing until Col. 31 line 52. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Land relating to an automated accounts receivable system to include the teachings of Wong relating to a sales returns subsystem. The motivation for such a modification is to decrease the maintenance that would be required in administering two separate systems instead of one.

Lee is a second analogous case that teaches the discount module described in the second limitation above. (Figure 8b item 328 and Para. 37). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Land relating to an automated accounts receivable system to

include the teachings of Lee relating to a sales discount sub-procedure. The motivation for such a modification would be to increase sales by offering discounts to customers.

With regard to Claim 2, Land teaches the system further comprising:

a data searching module for users to search the accounts receivable data and accounting entries data. (Col. 5 lines 58-60 and Col. 6 lines 62-65)

With regard to Claim 3, Land teaches the system further comprising:

a sales invoice managing module for managing sales invoices related to accounts receivable. (Col. 6 line 59 – Col. 7 line 27)

With regard to Claim 4, Land teaches the system wherein:

the application server electrically connects with a sales management system for accessing sales data stored in the sales management system and updating the accounts receivable data in the database server accordingly. (Figure 1 showing the AR server connected to the Order-Ship-Bill system; Figures 6,7; Col. 6 lines 6-41)

With regard to Claim 5, Land teaches the system wherein:

the application server electrically connects with an inventory management system for accessing delivery data stored in the inventory management system.
(Figures 6,7; Col. 6 lines 6-41)

With regard to Claim 6, Land teaches a method wherein:

retrieving advance payment data related to the purchase order according to the obtained purchase order data;
(Figure 10, items 436,456; Col. 9 line 17-24, describing other payment terms; Figure 11, item 490; Col. 10 lines 25-41, describing various payment adjustments)

obtaining a delivery message showing that the purchase order is fulfilled;
(Figure 10, item 430; Col. 9 lines 10-11)

calculating an account receivable of the purchase order;
(Figure 10, item 436; Col. 9 lines 25-28)

generating a sales invoice of the purchase order according to the calculated account receivable and the advance payment data; and
(Figure 10, item 432; Col. 9 lines 9-14)

generating one or more accounting entries according to the calculated account receivable and the advance payment data.
(Figure 10, item 462; Col. 9 lines 25-28)

With regard to Claim 7, Land teaches a method further comprising:

generating an invoice according to the retrieved advance payment data.
(Col. 9 line 17-24; Col. 10 lines 24-41, each describing other payment terms than simple credit on accounts receivable)

With regard to Claim 8, Wong teaches a method comprising:

confirming fulfillment of a purchase order released by a customer according to a delivery message related to the purchase order;
(Col. 17 lines 17-20)

determining whether a sales return has occurred on the purchase order;
(Col. 46 lines 49-66; Col. 49 lines 23-32)

canceling one or more sales invoices related to the purchase order if the customer has not accepted the alternative arrangements;
(Col. 29 lines 23-52)

balancing one or more accounts receivable related to the purchase order; and
(Col. 29 line 58 – Col. 30 line 9)

generating accounting entries for the sales return.
(Col. 29 line 58 – Col. 30 line 9)

Lee teaches the following limitations recited in this claim:

determining whether the purchase order has a sales discount if no sales return has occurred, and (Figure 8b, item 328; Para. 37)

generating accounting entries for the sales discount if the purchase order has a sales discount; (Figure 8b, item 336; Para. 38)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Wong relating to an automated web commerce system with accounts receivable subsystem to include the

teachings of Lee relating to a sales discount sub-procedure. The motivation for such a modification would be to further increase sales by offering discounts to customers.

With regard to the following limitations:

determining whether the customer has accepted an alternative arrangement for the purchase order if a sales return has occurred, and

reconfirming fulfillment of the purchase order if the customer has accepted the alternative arrangement;

The examiner takes Official Notice that the idea of offering a customer an alternative to a return, such as an exchange for present or future merchandise is old and well known in the art. As such, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Wong relating to an automated web commerce system with accounts receivable subsystem to include the steps of offering alternatives to a return, and the fulfillment of the order. The motivation for such a modification is to provide customers with flexibility so that they will feel comfortable with the shopping process, thereby increasing sales.

With regard to Claim 9, Wong does not teach the following limitation:

calculating a discount according to discount terms recorded in the purchase order.

However, Lee teaches this limitation at (Figure 8b, item 328; Para. 37). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Wong relating to an automated web commerce system with accounts receivable subsystem to include the teachings of Lee relating to a sales discount detailed in a purchase order. The motivation for such a modification would be to increase sales by offering discounts to customers.

With regard to Claim 10, Wong teaches the method further comprising:

generating a sales return certificate for the purchase order.
(Col. 29 lines 23-39).

With regard to Claim 11, Wong teaches the method further comprising:

the delivery message is obtained from an inventory management system.
(Col. 26 lines 33-45).

Conclusion

The following prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

a) Sakashita et al., U.S. Patent Application #20020046162, April 18, 2002, Method and System for Managing Accounts Receivable and Payable and Recording Medium for Storing Programs to Realize the Method.

b) Bickerton, et al., U.S. Patent #604312, March 21, 2000, Object Oriented Technology Framework for Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James Alpert whose telephone number is (703) 305-4001. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached on (703) 308-1065. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). Respectfully,

James M. Alpert
January 10, 2005

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